

FORM B – BUILDING

Assessor's Number USGS Quad Area(s) Form Number

01-77

Orleans

EAS.1305

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Town/City: EASTHAM

Place: (*neighborhood or village*): North Eastham

Photograph



Address: 880 North Sunken Meadow Road

Historic Name: Elnathan Eldredge House

Uses: Present: Single Family Dwelling House

Original: Single Family Dwelling House

Date of Construction: ca. 1938

Source: 1938 USGS aerial photo

Style/Form: No Style

Architect/Builder: Unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Unknown

Wall/Trim: Wood shingles/ Wood

Roof: Asphalt shingles

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:

Three outbuildings (one converted to laundry, one converted to living room and bath, 2023, Photos 3, 4)

Major Alterations (*with dates*):

Comprehensive renovation (2023)

Condition: Good

Moved: no ☒ yes ☐ **Date:**

Acreage: 0.69 acres

Setting: This property is located at the northwest end of North Sunken Meadow Road on a peninsula with a cluster of cottages on small parcels, most dating from the mid- to late-20th century. Sunken Meadow itself is across the street to the west, and there is additional salt marsh (and former cranberry bogs) to the east. This parcel is largely left open with minimal formal landscaping.

Locus Map



Recorded by: Eric Dray, Preservation Consultant, for

Organization: Eastham Historical Commission

Date (*month / year*): April 2025

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

EASTHAM

880 NORTH SUNKEN MEADOW ROAD

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☐ Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.

Use as much space as necessary to complete the following entries, allowing text to flow onto additional continuation sheets.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

Describe architectural features. Evaluate the characteristics of this building in terms of other buildings within the community.

This house consists of two connected blocks. This house was comprehensively renovated in 2023, but the only major alteration was creating the open and deeper porch from a formerly screened porch (compare Cover photo to Photo 2). Looking from North Sunken Meadow Road, there is a one-story block with a variation on a lean-to roof with a recessed open porch under the front roof slope, and to its left is a side-front block. Extending from the rear of this block is a small ell. The elevations are clad in wood shingles with plain cornerboards. The roofs are clad in asphalt shingles with modest box cornices. A brick chimney rises up the left (NW) side of the side-gable block. Windows all appear to be modern, thermal 1/1 replacements including two sets of three-part window systems.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Discuss the history of the building. Explain its associations with local (or state) history. Include uses of the building, and the role(s) the owners/occupants played within the community.

Incorporated as Nauset Plantation in 1646, and changed to Eastham in 1651, Eastham territory originally extended south to Pleasant Bay and north beyond Wellfleet Harbor. The early development pattern for what we now know as Eastham was impacted by its absence of deep-water harbor facilities. Relatively fertile soil led to dispersed agricultural settlement, but residential and commercial development was concentrated to the north at Wellfleet Harbor and to the south at Town Cove and Pleasant Bay. When the separate towns of Wellfleet and Orleans were created in the late-18th century, Eastham became and remained one of the least populated towns on the Cape throughout the 19th century.

In the 19th century, Eastham was the agricultural center of the Outer Cape. Crops evolved over time; corn and dairy were surpassed in the early-20th century by asparagus and turnips - two crops well suited for the sandy soil. In 1900, 58% of Eastham's workers were employed as farmers, but by 1930 that number had dwindled to 21%. Summer resort development, including cottage colonies and subdivisions of former farmland that would transform Eastham, had begun in earnest in the 1920s as middle-class access to car ownership increased and Cape roads were improved.

This house has an Assessor date of 1910, but as can be seen from the 1910 Barnstable County Atlas, North Sunken Meadow Road at that time was very sparsely settled and did not yet extend to the shores of Cape Cod Bay (Figure 2). This property was part of a 56± acre parcel of land that was held by the North Eastham Cranberry Association, which was established in 1896.¹ In 1929, trustees of the Association from Falmouth and NY, NY sold this large parcel of meadow and upland to Elnathan E. Eldredge, Jr. of Orleans.²

Elnathan Edwin Eldredge, Jr. (1897-1977) was born in Orleans, the son of a cranberry grower. He also worked as a cranberry grower, and very likely bought this land for cranberry farming. Based on census records up through 1940, he was living in Orleans. By 1950, however, he was living on Sunken Meadow Road with his second wife, Emma Frances (Snow), whom he married in 1949, and he was working in real estate sales and rentals.³

The 1930 Eastham Tax Commitment book listed Elnathan Eldredge with a cranberry barn and camp house, but they may have been located elsewhere on his 56-acre parcel. The United States Geological Survey (USGS) began conducting aerial photographic

¹ Barnstable County Registry of Deeds, Book 225/ page 547.

² Book 465/ Page 556.

³ They also briefly owned a bay-front cottage near Campground Road in the early 1950s (20 Gile Road, EAS.327).

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surveys of Cape Cod in 1938. In that first survey, this portion of upland appears to remain undeveloped, with cranberry bogs to the east (Photo 5). By the time of the 1952 USGS survey, the upland to the northwest had been developed for cottages, and a cottage appears to be in place in this location (Photo 6). It is unknown, but possible, that the building shown in the 1938 USGS photo was incorporated into the main house on this parcel.

In 1951, Elnathan and Emma Eldredge sold a half-acre+ portion of their land, with buildings, to Lloyd P. and Grace E. Eddy of Swansea, MA.⁴ Lloyd P. Eddy (1899-1982) worked as an electrician in Swansea before moving to Eastham. They were living here in 1964 when they sold this property to Carolyn G. and Briggs A. Easterbrooks, Jr. of Eastham.⁵ In 1966, the Easterbrooks sold the property to Ann and Peter Krawchuk of Watertown, CT.⁶ The property stayed in the Krawchuk family until 2003 when it was sold to an LLC based in Hopkinton, MA.⁷

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

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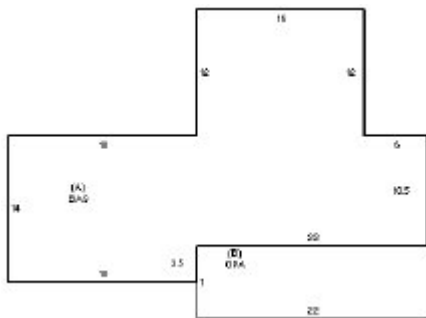


Figure 1. Assessor Sketch Map.



Photo 2. 2010 view, looking northeast (2010 Assessor Photo).

⁴ Book 792/ Page 410.

⁵ Book 1234/ Page 253.

⁶ Book 1338/ Page 1054.

⁷ Book 35856/ Page 322.

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Photo 3. View from N. Sunken Meadow Road, looking north.



Photo 4. View from N. Sunken Meadow Road, looking west.

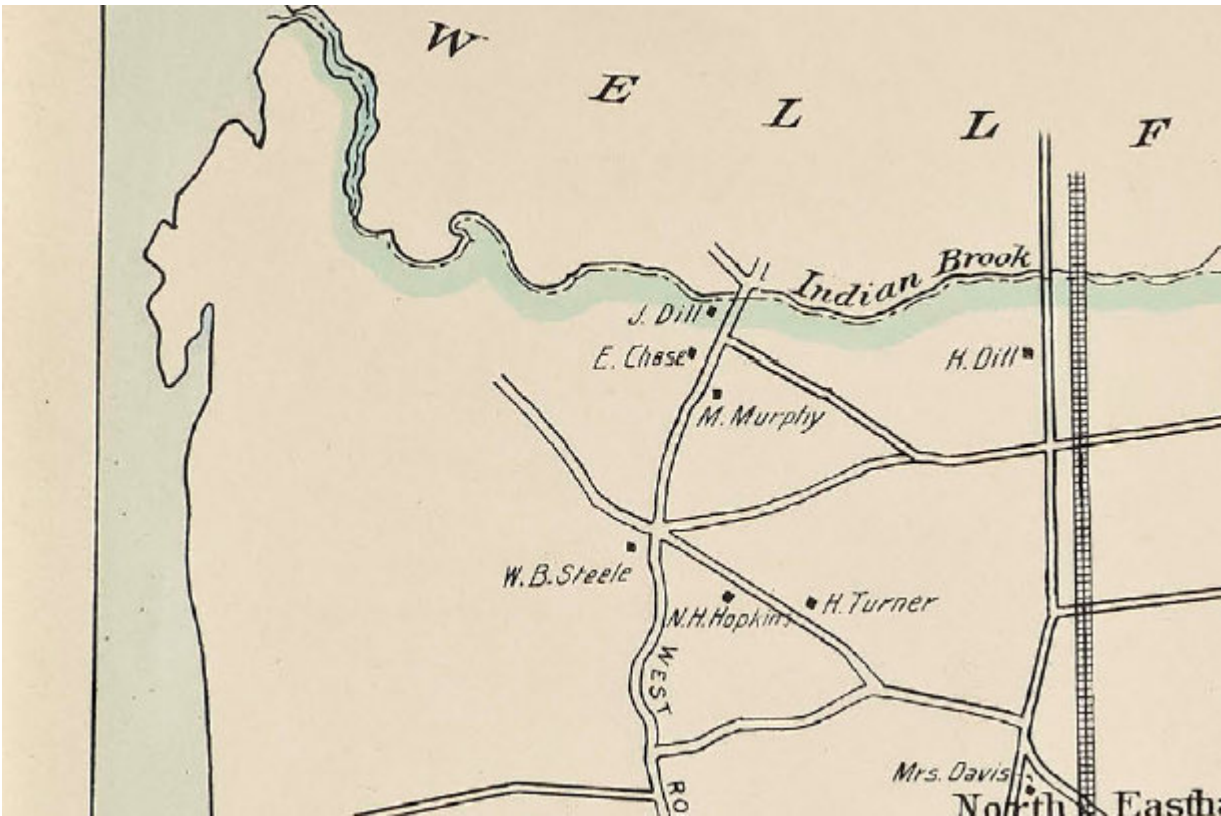


Figure 2. Detail of 1910 Barnstable County Atlas.

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Photo 5. Detail of 1938 USGS aerial survey.



Photo 6. Detail of 1952 USGS aerial survey.